

THE MOSLEM PILGRIMAGE

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AN AUTHENTIC ACCOUNT OF THE JOURNEY FROM EGYPT TO THE
HOLY LAND OF ISLAM, AND A DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF
MECCA AND MEDINA AND ALL THE RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES
PERFORMED THERE BY THE PILGRIMS FROM ALL PARTS OF
THE MOHAMMEDAN WORLD.

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NOTE

The following account of the Moslem Pilgrimage was written before the close of the Great War when the Hedjaz was Turkish territory and Hussein Ibn Ali was Grand Sherif of Mecca. Although the political aspect of the country has changed, and Ibn Seoud is now King of the Hedjaz, the sacred shrines there remain exactly the same as before, and the Moslems still perform their pilgrimage as they have been doing for long generations, and will continue to do.

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THE ILLUSTRATIONS

The illustrations in this book are reproduced with the kind permission of Lewa Ibrahim Rifat Pasha, author of the great work entitled "Mirât Al-Haramain", and of Mohammed Labib Al-Batanuni Bey, author of "Al-Rihla Al-Higazieh", owners of the copyright.

P R E F A C E

THE Moslem pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina is one of the most important, if not the most important of all such religious observances. It cannot, therefore, but be interesting to know how it is performed, particularly as no Christian is allowed to set foot within the sacred territories.

The European, whether a tourist or a resident in Egypt, who witnesses the departure of the Mahmal, or its return three months afterwards, wonders at this pomp and show. He asks who makes the rich embroidery called the Kiswa, who pays for it, how the caravan gets to Mecca and Medina, why it is guarded by troops, and many other questions the answers to which he finds nowhere. In order to make this history as complete as I can, I have added all that could be ascertained about the different routes, the natives of Mecca and Medina, the Bedouin and their habits, customs and modes of living, the Emir of Mecca (later King of the Hedjaz), the former Turkish authorities in the Peninsula, and a mass of information on various subjects connected with the country and its inhabitants. I have tried to make the book as complete, although concise, on the subject of this great pilgrimage, as possible.

The source from which the information contained in this book is derived is a four-fold one. My first authority is the late Mohammed Sadek Pasha, who was an officer on the staff of the

Egyptian Army and visited the sacred towns more than once and embodied all the information he obtained at first hand in a book now out of print. It is to this authority that I am indebted for the greatest part of the information given, not only with regard to the routes followed by the caravans, but also to the Bedouin who inhabit these parts of Arabia. My second authority is Mohammed Labib Al-Batanuni Bey, who accompanied the ex-Khedive Abbas Pasha in 1909 to the Hedjaz, and subsequently published a record of this journey. My third authority is a number of newspaper articles relative to the officials who accompany the caravan, much information about the sacred towns, etc., and my fourth is that of men who made the journey and either gave me information not obtainable in the above two books or elucidated certain matters which were obscure to me.

As for the illustrations, they are principally drawn from the above two works, and from that of Ibrahim Rifat Pasha, the most complete on the subject, and I wish here to express my gratitude and indebtedness to the authors. They were mostly taken by the authors ; there can, therefore, be as little doubt with regard to their authenticity as to that of the account which they help to explain.

Finally, I venture to hope that this book will prove of interest to Europeans.

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I.

INTRODUCTORY

THE religion of Islam is divided into two parts; faith and practice. The faith is distributed under six different articles, viz: Faith in God; in His angels; in the Koran; in His prophets; in the resurrection and final judgment; and in predestination.

The articles of religious practice are four-fold: prayer, alms, fasting and pilgrimage. Pilgrimage, therefore, is the fourth practical duty enjoined upon Moslems. Every true believer is bound to make one pilgrimage to Mecca in the course of his life, either personally or by proxy. In this latter case, his name must be mentioned in every prayer offered up by his substitute.

In the following pages all the details of this pilgrimage, the most popular in the world, considering the very large number of Moslems who leave their homes to perform this religious practice, are given. The narrative begins with the departure of the Egyptian Holy Carpet from Cairo and closes with its return, both occasions being

recognized by the Egyptian Government as official feasts, and consequently public holidays, when the Sovereign, surrounded by members of his family, his Ministers and high officials, and all the religious dignitaries of Cairo, in full dress, hands the halter of the Mahmal camel to the Emir Al-Hag, or Commander of the Caravan, and receives it back from him, on its departure and return from the Holy Land of Islam.

On these occasions the garrison of Cairo in full force takes part in the ceremony and is drawn up opposite the Mastaba, or kiosque, under the walls of the Citadel, in which the ceremony takes place. The Mahmal is received with Royal honours, the garrison presenting arms as soon as it makes its appearance in the Manshie Square where the troops are amassed.

According to Egyptian regulations the Sovereign and the Mahmal are received by the whole garrison with the same Royal honours.

II.

THE MAHMAL

PILGRIMAGE to the Holy Land of Islam is a duty incumbent on every Moslem, free, of mature age, of sound intellect, able-bodied and in a position to defray the expenses of the journey, once in life, provided the road is safe. Some poor men, however, perform this duty either as beggars, who make the journey on foot and live on the charity of the pilgrims, or as servants to wealthy pilgrims.

A Surra, or purse, is sent to the Hara-mein, or the sacred territories of Mecca and Medina, every year. This monetary gift by the Government was originally instituted by Al-Muktadir Billah, one of the Abbaside Caliphs, to pay the students at the mosques of Mecca and Medina, and the expenses of the tekyiehs, or asylums, at these two towns. Besides this gift in cash thirty kantars, or hundredweights, of sweets, three kantars of wax tapers, and a number of fur coats, cloaks, rolls of stuff, Cashmere shawls and muslin are also sent every year.

The staff of the Mahmal is composed of an Emir, or commander, an Emin, or treasurer, a physician and a chemist, a cashier, two clerks,

various minor officials and a number of servants. The Emir used, in olden days, to receive an indemnity of L.E. 500 to defray the expenses of the journey, but in later years, this was reduced to only L.E. 75 a month. As he is usually an official of the Government, either on active service or on the pension-list, this indemnity represents an appreciable addition to his income. The other officials, employees and servants are paid proportionately. They all receive rations for themselves and their servants.

Before the Caravan starts, the Kiswa, or covering of the Kaaba, which is manufactured in the mosque of Al-Hussein in Cairo, is handed over to the Emir. This Kiswa is composed of eight pieces of black silk of the length of the Kaaba, or Cubical House in Mecca, two to cover each side, and various other embroidered hangings, curtains, coverings, etc., all of which are put in place on the 10th Zul Higga, the date on which the Courban Bairam feast falls.

The first to cover the Kaaba was Karb, son of Saad, King of Humeir, one of the sovereigns of Yemen, but it was Abdul Malik, son of Marwan, who first covered it with silk to protect it against torrents. From the days of the Mamun, the coverings have been replaced by others every year. In 750 A.H.* Saleh, son of Nasir, son of Kalaun, King of Egypt, bought three villages in the

* A.H. stands for anno hegira or the year of the hira, i.e., the flight of Mohammed from Mecca to Medina on the 12th September 622.

Kalioubieh Province, the revenue of which he dedicated to the Kiswa on condition that it is renewed every year and that it is made of silk. The revenue of these villages having decreased with time, Sultan Suliman Khan bought seven villages in the Sharkieh Province for the same purpose. The cost of this Kiswa was some years ago L.E. 4,500, not inclusive of the price of the sweets, shawls, etc., which cost an additional sum of at least L.E. 200.

The Mahmal usually leaves in the latter half of the month of Shauwal. The Sovereign, as before stated, with great ceremony hands in person the halter of the camel which carries it, to the Emir Al Hag, and, convoyed by a detachment of soldiers, foot, cavalry, and artillery, and followed by sheikhs, drummers and others, it starts on its long journey.

The Mahmal is a square structure, surmounted by a square dome, and covered with red silk material on which passages from the Koran are embroidered. At its four corners, as well as at its summit, silver balls of peculiar shape, called in Arabic *asakir*, or soldiers, are placed. It weighs seventeen kantars.

Arab writers do not agree on the manner in which the Mahmal originated. Some say that when Mohammed was on his way to Syria, before declaring his prophecy, his effects were placed on a camel which was looked upon as distinguished from the other camels of the caravan, and was called Mahmal. Later a special camel was set

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aside to carry the Kiswa and the presents sent every year to Mecca and Medina, and was called by the same name.

Others, however, say that when Shagarat Al Durr (Spray of Pearls), wife of one of the kings of Egypt, made the pilgrimage to the Holy Land of Islam in 645 A.H. a square palanquin, beautifully fitted up, was made for her to avoid the fatigues of the long journey in the desert.

Apart from the cost of manufacturing the Kiswa and the Mahmal, the following are the sums annually paid by the Egyptian Treasury in connection with the pilgrimage to the Holy Land :—

Salaries to the Emir and officials	
of the caravan	L.E. 1,282
Allowances to the Bedouin	„ 2,511
Allowances to the Sherifs in	
Mecca and Medina.	„ 1,493
Expenses of the Tekyieh of Mecca	„ 1,961
Expenses of the Tekyieh of	
Medina	„ 1,657
Allowances to natives in Mecca	
and Medina	„ 2,879
Price of wheat given as charity	
in Mecca and Medina	„ 22,500
Price of candles and lamps for	
the two Harams.	„ 1,629
Transport by land and sea, and	
hire of camels	„ 4,248

Carried forward L.E. 40,160

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<i>Brought forward</i>	L.E.	40,160
Price of tents, water-skins, etc.	„	155
Petty expenses	„	265
Allowances to officials in Mecca and Medina paid by the Wakfs of the two Harams, the Private Wakfs and Royal Khassa, and the Ministry of Finance	„	6,000
Price of oil, mats, etc., for the two Harams paid by the Ministry of Wakfs.	„	6,420
Total	L.E.	53,000

The camel which carries the Mahmal to Mecca and Medina and back is considered the happiest camel in the world. It is the property of the Egyptian Government and is housed in a large airy stable in Cairo, and employed only during three months of the year, when it takes its holy load to the sacred cities of Islam. A she-camel lives with it, and, when dead, it is succeeded in its duty by its oldest foal which is treated in like manner.

Besides being the happiest camel it is also the most honoured, for sovereigns, princes, ministers, ulema and other dignitaries receive it on occasions of great pomp, and kiss its halter both before and after its journey as a blessing from the Almighty.

III.

THE CAIRO TO MECCA ROUTE

THE Mohammedan caravan in previous years followed, on its way to the holy places of Islam, either of two roads: one all the way by land through the Arabian Desert, and the other by land as far as Suez only, thence by sea to Jeddah, whence the caravan again proceeded by land to Mecca. Wealthy pilgrims usually went by the latter route to avoid the fatigues of a long march in the desert. Now the Mahmal goes by Railway to Suez, thence by steamer to Jeddah.

The way from Suez through the desert to a certain distance was marked with three buildings, two of which looked very much like windmills, three metres broad and four metres high, while the third was in the form of a pillar three metres high, their object being to guide the caravan. After a certain number of hours' rest, the order to strike the camp and load was usually given by a gun fired by order of the Emir Al-Hag.

After two days march, the caravan reached the Fort of Nikhl, which is a square building twenty-

eight metres long on each side. It was garrisoned by a governor, a captain, a lieutenant (who is at the same time storekeeper), one non-commissioned officer and twenty-six men armed with old-fashioned rifles. There were also six artillerymen and one old gun. This was an important halting-place, as it was here that the pilgrims replenished their water-bottles from a well which was worked by four oxen usually sent by the Egyptian Government a month in advance. When the caravan returned to Egypt these oxen were sent back with it.

Close to this fort stands the tomb of Sheikh Nikhl who gave his name to this locality.

After a week's march the caravan reached the Fort of Akaba, which is constructed at a distance of three hundred metres from the shore. It was built by Sultan Murad, son of Sultan Selim, and is a square building sixty-three metres on each side. There is here a well from which the pilgrims drew water. The fort was garrisoned by a governor with the rank of captain, and forty men, seven of whom were artillerymen. It is the largest fort on the caravan road. The population of this locality does not exceed one hundred, but Bedouin came during the pilgrim season to sell pomegranates, peaches and grapes which they brought from Maan on the boundaries of Syria.

It was here that the Bedouin who acted as guards and guides received their wages as well as the usual cloaks, shawls, sweets, etc.

On the thirteenth day the caravan reached Muwelih, a town on the Red Sea. It has a fort built by Sultan Selim and garrisoned by sixty-three soldiers and armed with one brass gun and seven of steel, all of which are utterly useless for practical purposes. There are here many wells, and the population of the town does not exceed one hundred, besides the Bedouin. Fever and spleen complaints prevail here, owing to the unripe dates on which the natives live for the greater part of the year, wheat being very scarce.

On the seventeenth day the caravan reached Istabl Antar, or Antar's Stable, where there are three wells, and later in the day it reached the fort of Al-Wagh, which is armed with one gun and garrisoned by eight soldiers. There is also here a tower, not far from the sea, on an eminence, armed with two guns and garrisoned by thirty soldiers. The population of Al-Wagh numbers about five hundred, besides the Bedouin. Water here was sometimes so scarce that the pilgrims had to pay for a water-skin of water not less than P.T. 10, which they did willingly considering that the thermometer stood in summer at 42° Centigrade at midday. The garrison of the fort dreads the Bedouin and therefore lives always indoors.

The caravan rested a day at Al-Wagh before continuing its march, and then reached Al-Hôra which is a beautiful oasis in the middle of the desert, and on the twenty-sixth day reached

Yambo. This is a sea-port with eight hundred houses and a population of five thousand, most of whom are Egyptian merchants. Wheat was sent here from Egypt for Medina, and torrent water was stored in cisterns and sold to pilgrims at six or eight piastres the skin. The place is infested with flies, and of course without sanitary arrangements, public or private, of any description.

On the twenty-eighth day the caravan reached Al-Kaaba and later in the day Mastura, and on the twenty-ninth day it halted and was joined by a Sherif and his suite sent by the Emir of Mecca to accompany the caravan to Mecca. Later in the day the caravan reached Rabigh. Here every pilgrim, whether arriving by land or sea, performs the *ihram*, *i.e.*, assumes the pilgrim garb, before proceeding further on his journey. The *ihram* consists in the pilgrim shaving his beard, his head and all the hair on his body, cutting his moustache so short that his upper lip becomes visible, paring his nails, and taking a bath. He then covers his loins with a large white scarf, and with another the upper part of his body in a peculiar prescribed manner. The head is uncovered, but a pair of sandals covering only the toes is worn on the feet. A certain number of prayers is then offered up to God.

The pilgrim who wishes to add the performance of the greater pilgrimage to a mere visit of reverence to the sacred places of Islam offers up certain

other prayers which he repeats on mounting and dismounting his camel or horse, and may girdle himself with a sash in which his money is kept. The pilgrim should wear seamless clothes, but he may wear a ring. Once the pilgrim has performed the ihram he is not allowed to shave his hair, pare his nails, or cover his head except with an umbrella as a protection against the sun, but great care should be taken so that it does not touch him. He is not to perfume himself, shoot game, approach his wife, or dispute with another, otherwise he will have to offer a sheep as sacrifice. The pilgrim, when thus attired, is called muhrim. The ihram must be worn until the pilgrimage is completed.

A woman-pilgrim's ihram differs somewhat from that of a man. She may wear sewn clothes provided they are perfectly clean, and must not cover her face. To prevent men looking at her she may hide her face behind palmleaves knotted in the shape of a fan through the holes of which she can see. Some ladies, however, hang up a piece of muslin on their faces, but they must not cover their hands which are usually dyed with henna on the eve of the ihram. According to tradition, a lady-pilgrim must not enter Mecca except with her husband or a muhrim, *i.e.*, a man she cannot marry, such as an uncle, or a nephew.

The sight of the pilgrims of the caravan all wearing the same dress, free from the ornaments of this world, and looking like the dead covered with

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their shrouds, is very impressive. The order to wash is a token of inner and outer purification, and taking away their ordinary clothes is a sign of their giving up the world and approaching the door of God in a humble and submissive condition.

On the thirty-third day the caravan reached Bir Al-Tafla, where there is a market and a fresh water well of that name. According to tradition the water of this well was bitter but turned sweet when the Prophet spat in it. On the thirty-fifth day the caravan reached the tomb of Sayyida Maymuna, one of the wives of Mohammed, and later in the day it reached Al-Amra. Fifty metres further a wall six metres high, five metres broad and two metres thick rises. It is surmounted by three small domes, and a similar wall rises opposite to it at a distance of forty metres. These walls separate the Land of Hill (the whole world beyond the territory of Mecca) from Hirm (the sacred territory of Mecca) through which the pilgrim to Mecca has to pass.

On the thirty-sixth day the pilgrims reached Mecca.

Those who have carefully calculated the distance between Cairo and Mecca reckon it at about 1400 kilometres which the caravan covered, at the rate of four kilometres per hour, in 347 hours.

IV.

THE SUEZ-JEDDAH ROUTE

IN olden days before the invention of steamships, pilgrims went from Suez to Jeddah in sailing ships, but the dangers and hardships of the voyage were so great that that route had to be abandoned and the land route through the Arabian Desert followed.

But here another danger threatened the pilgrims, for the Bedouin waylaid them and not only robbed them of their possessions, but murdered them also. The Egyptian Authorities had therefore to resort to bribery to protect the caravan, and it is from those days that annual presents are given to the Arabs to secure the safety of the Mahmal and the pilgrims. And yet, notwithstanding these bribes, which are very substantial, the pilgrims were not as safe as they ought to be for the Egyptian Government had to send a military force to guard the caravan.

The military force which accompanied the Mahmal was composed of 300 soldiers, besides 20 artillerymen, 35 horses, 7 mules, 2 field guns and 40 cases of ammunition.

THE SUEZ-JEDDAH ROUTE

The sea voyage from Suez to Jeddah is accomplished very comfortably in three days. As soon as the steamer carrying the Mahmal anchors, music is played, drums are beaten and guns are fired to announce to the inhabitants of the town the joyful news of the arrival of the Holy Carpet. There being no quays in the port, the Mahmal and its staff are transferred from the steamer to the shore, a distance of two miles, in gatireshs, or lighters, and pass the night opposite the customs house. The next morning they enter the town in great pomp by the Bab Al-Gumruk, or Customs House Gate, the top part of which is demolished to allow the Mahmal to pass through, and alight not far from the barracks.

Jeddah is a town of about three thousand five hundred houses and fifty thousand inhabitants, about one hundred of whom are Europeans, mostly Greeks, some of whom have amassed considerable wealth. There are five mosques, one pharmacy, thirty inns and one hotel in Jeddah. The natives earn a great deal of money from the sale of water to the pilgrims, there being a cistern in almost every house which is filled with rain water sold in the pilgrim season, the natives themselves drinking stagnant water from pits. These cisterns, having at one time become useless, the then Governor of the Hedjaz, Osman Nuri Pasha, laid pipes from a spring of water called Al-Rughama, ten kilometres out of town, to bring the water to a large reservoir from which the water

ran to seven tanks from which it could be drawn. But with time these pipes became worn out, and the natives, making considerable profit from the sale of rain water, as above stated, opposed their reconstruction. This is the reason why these pipes were never repaired or replaced.

Not less than 120,000 pilgrims pass through Jeddah every year, and the Government derives its greatest revenue from the customs which bring in about £50,000 per annum. Jeddah was garrisoned by about three hundred Turkish soldiers commanded by a lieutenant-colonel, and the slave trade, both there and in Mecca, was, until some years ago, and perhaps still is, openly carried on in the pilgrim season, the prices varying from seventy dollars upwards.

One of the curious habits of the natives of Jeddah is that the male population prefers the red colour to all others. They wear red sashes round their waists, red shawls over their heads and often red waist-coats over their gallabiehs.

Another most curious habit in Jeddah and Mecca is that the women who do not go to Arafah wear, during the days on which the pilgrims visit that mountain, men's dress and go about the streets from sunset to sunrise chanting songs.

The natives of Jeddah have peculiar marriage habits. Women do not go out in bridal processions, but the bridegroom goes to the house of his bride with the object of seeing her for the first time and offers her various presents for the privi-

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lege of what is called "uncovering the bride's face." He then returns home followed by some ladies of his bride's family, and there an hour afterwards the bride joins him.

The following day the bridegroom invites his friends to an evening party. Most of the women of Jeddah smoke tombac.

There were in Jeddah two schools: the Islah (or the School of Reformation) had eighty students, and the Rushdieh which had about one hundred and twenty. The former was maintained by public subscriptions, and the latter was a Government institution, but both were primary schools where Arabic and Turkish were taught with a little arithmetic and calligraphy.

The tomb of Mother Eve is situated outside the town, and is 150 metres long and three metres wide. It is surmounted by three domes, one at the head, another at the feet and the third in the middle, and may have been an old temple of the time of the Gahilieh.

The distance between Jeddah and Mecca is thirty-three hours by camel, of which ten are for rest at a halting-place called Al-Hadda. The fare of a camel is about three dollars. On the famous Hasawy donkeys of Arabia the distance can be covered in twelve hours, one and a half of which are for rest.

Mecca has more than one name. It is also called Bakka, the Sure Town, the Sacred Mosque, the Mother of Mercy, the Mother of Pleasure,

the Mother of Towns, the Tuhama of the Hedjaz, the Town of the Arabs, the Good City.

As for its titles, it is called the honoured, the honourable, the illustrious, the comprehensive, the blessed. It is the birth-place of the Prophet who said : " The love of one's fatherland is of faith." The love of Mecca, therefore, was considered by him as an obligation, because it was his native town.

THE SACRED CITY OF MECCA

MECÇA, the capital of the Hedjaz, is a town of about seven thousand houses and has a population of about 150,000, one third of whom are native and the rest are Arabs, Indians, Syrians, Moors, etc. The mixture of so many races together by marriage and intercourse has made the greater part of the population of the city a medley of types and characters. They thus have, according to a recent writer, "the meekness of the Anatolian, the pride of the Turk, the haughtiness of the Persian, the flexibility of the Egyptian, the hardness of the Circassian, the vivacity of the Moor, the simplicity of the Indian, the guile of the Yemenite, the restlessness of the Syrian, not to speak of the luxury of the civilised and the frugality of the Bedouin."

In their outward appearance also they are a mixture of Mohammedan races; they wear the turban of the Indian, the kaftan of the Egyptian, the gubba of the Syrian, the sash of the Turk, in the folds of which a gilt dagger is placed. The highest class, however, is free from all these mixtures for it has not inter-married with foreigners; it has, therefore, maintained its original race and character.

Their language, too, has undergone a certain change. They have not only modified the pronunciation of many Arabic words, but have also

introduced many Turkish and Persian words, and of late years many European words. Thus "bazan" for "bassin" (basin), "bilet" for "billet" (ticket), "instasion" for "station", "shumindufer" for "chemin de fer" (railway), "fagon" for "wagon" (waggon), "birsonil" for "personnel" (staff), have found their way into their language, all of which came from the French on the introduction of the railway into the Hedjaz. Most of the natives speak Turkish, while the mutawifin, or guides, who take the pilgrims round the Cubical House at Mecca, speak Hindustani, Persian, Chinese, etc.

The natives of Mecca eat only twice a day and are fond of show and pomp. They make three razor cuts on each cheek of their boys, and women go about enveloped in large black sheets in which two small holes are made in the part covering the head to enable them to see. In summer the wealthy natives go to Al-Taif, at a distance of thirty-six hours by camel, or eighteen hours by mule, to escape the heat of the Sacred City. Al Taif is 1550 metres above sea level, and is renowned for its excellent fruit. The two sons of Mohammed, Al-Taher and Al-Taib, are buried there.

The native social gatherings in Mecca are limited particularly to hearing singing and seeing boys dance. In the month of Ragab the natives go to Medina where they spend all the money they gained during the pilgrim season. They are thus constantly in a state of poverty.

THE SACRED CITY OF MECCA

All the inhabitants of Mecca are, of course, Mohammedans, no infidel having been knowingly allowed within the limits of the sacred territories since the ninth year of the Hegira. They take every precaution to make sure that no foreigner goes beyond Jeddah, Yambo and Sanaa to the south, and Al-Ala to the north. Those who do so, therefore, run the risk of losing their lives at the hands of the natives, and even the Government is incapable of protecting them.

Christians, therefore, who have been to Mecca at different times, and described the political, religious, social or geographical conditions of the country, had to disguise themselves as natives, after having made a deep study of Arabic, and a profession of Islamism. According to Arab writers only four Europeans, a Swiss, an Englishman, a Dutchman and a Frenchman, visited the sacred territories, the earliest of whom was the first, who was a Vaudois from Lausanne. His name, of course, was Burckhardt, and he was converted to Islam and studied Arabic in the Azhar University before undertaking the journey to Mecca and Medina. He lived seven years in Arabia and died in 1232 A.H. in Egypt as a Mohammedan, and was buried in the cemetery of Bab Al-Futuh in Cairo where his tomb still exists. The Arabic name he adopted was Ibrahim Al Mahdi Ibn Abdalla.

The Government of Mecca was vested in two authorities : the administrative, in the hands of the

Sherif who was called Sayid Al-Gami, or Master of All, and tried the great lawsuits, and the financial and military, which was in the hands of the Governor-General who was usually a Turk. The unimportant lawsuits were tried by the Cadi who was appointed by the Sultan.

There is in Mecca a telegraph and a post-office, and, apart from the fact that most of the telegrams received and handed in during the pilgrim season fail to reach the addressees, the post-office was unique of its kind in the world. The sacks of letters were thrown out into the narrow street leading to the post-office and there sorted by the pilgrims themselves who opened them and took their letters and those of their friends also ! This system existed also in Medina, Yambo and Jeddah.

The commerce of Mecca is entirely in the hands of foreigners, mostly Indians who sell rosaries, carpets, and Egyptian and Syrian silk stuffs, and the main occupation of the silversmiths is the manufacture of rings which are reputed as a remedy against haemorrhoids. The majority of the natives, however, earn their living as mutawwifin, or guides. The coins which have currency in Mecca are the Egyptian and Turkish, the French 5-franc piece, the Maria Theresa dollar, the rupee and the English and French gold coins, but they have no fixed value. In fact, the natives obtain them from the pilgrims for less than their worth and part with them for more.

The number of pilgrims who visit Mecca every

year is estimated at 200,000, who spend at the rate of £ 5 each, or an aggregate of one million pounds sterling, during their month's stay in the Sacred City. The natives, however, instead of looking with pleasure on this great crowd from whom they earn enough to live on during the whole year, despise and ill-treat their unfortunate visitors and consider their money as their legal perquisite.

The air of Mecca when the pilgrim season is over becomes unwholesome owing to the absence of all sanitary arrangements. In fact, it is so foul that the Bedouin place two pieces of cotton wool in their nostrils, which they tie with a thread round their necks and take off only when they see no dirt about in the streets. In summer congestion of the brain, sunstroke, diseases of the eye, liver and the digestive organs and dysentery, as well as fever of different sorts and small-pox prevail in the town. There is not a single hospital in Mecca and only one native druggist, most of whose medicines are too old to be of any use. The medical officer of the Egyptian Mahmal, however, renders great services to the pilgrims of all nationalities.

It is a remarkable fact that while all Christian churches have established convents, hostelries and asylums in Jerusalem for the comfort of pilgrims, where the poor can find free hospitality for a week, the Mohammedans have no similar institutions in Mecca, not to speak of hospitals, which, as above stated, have no existence there.

The length of Mecca from north to south is about three miles, and its breadth from east to west is about a mile and a half only.

The natives drink from wells or from cisterns which they fill with rain water, or from springs such as that of Ain Zubaida, whose water runs in pipes to tanks from which water-carriers fill their skins.

The spring was named after Zubaida, wife of Harun Al-Rashid, as it was by her orders and at her expense that its water was brought to Mecca. It was previously called Hunein, and is situated at a distance of three days' march from Mecca. Had it not been for the water of this spring the natives of Mecca would have perished, as the rain and well-water there are far from enough to supply their needs.

The water is carried through a covered channel one metre broad and one and a half metres deep. This channel was repaired on several occasions, the last of which in 1327 A.H. when the Egyptian Government sent an engineer for the purpose. These last repairs cost the Egyptian Government no less than L.E. 25,000.

Besides the Cubical House there are in Mecca six mosques and sixty-seven other places of worship. There are no less than ten places in Mecca itself where all prayers are said to be heard and granted, and five outside the town.

The streets of Mecca are narrow and irregular with the exception of one which is at places eight metres wide and at others twenty metres.

There are two small libraries in Mecca, but their books are limited to religion and Arabic grammar. As for schools, there are also two, and the lessons given to the young natives do not exceed reading the Koran, Arabic grammar and arithmetic. One of these schools is maintained by public subscriptions in India; in the Haram itself a few hundred students, mostly from Java, are taught Arabic and the exegesis of the Koran by thirty teachers who were paid by the Turkish Government from 100 to 150 piastres per month.

According to Mohammedan tradition, in 1892 B.C. God ordered Abraham to emigrate with his son, Ismail, and Ismail's mother, Hagar, to this valley where the latter discovered the well of Zamzam. Here Hagar lived with her son and built herself a house, the Patriarch coming from Palestine to visit her from time to time. He was then ordered by God to make of this house a temple where people prayed; he, therefore, demolished it and built the Cubical House on its site. Mecca, according to an Arab authority, is the Babylonian word for house.

It is not the object of the author to trace the history of the town, but he may say that the Prophet Mohammed emigrated from it to Medina, which he conquered in the eighth year of the Hegira, since which time Mecca and Medina became dependencies of the Mohammedan Caliphate. In the year 619 A.H. it was captured by the son of the ruler of Egypt and remained a dependency of

this country until Sultan Selim II annexed Egypt. But in 1227 A.H. it was captured by Mohamed Aly Pasha, the founder of the Egyptian Royal Family, and remained a part of Egypt until 1256 when it reverted to Turkey.

Two of the results of the Egyptian occupation of Mecca are the foundation of the Egyptian tekyieh, or asylum, and its endowment, and the construction of the residence of the Sherif where he also has his office.

The house in which the Prophet was born is composed of three rooms, in one of which is a hollow piece of marble to indicate the very spot in which he came to the world. The whole building is about a metre and a half lower than the level of the street, and does not exceed eighty square metres in area.

The house of Khadiga, Mohammed's first wife, is also lower than the level of the street and contains the room in which the Prophet made his prayers and where the revelations were made to him.

It will be remembered that Mohammed married Khadiga in the 28th year before the Hegira, and that she died at the age of sixty-four years, four years before that event.

The Mohammedan law prescribes for every pilgrim the washing, if possible, of the whole body before entering Mecca. The pilgrim passes through several roads and visits a number of tombs, such as those of Khadiga, the first wife of Mohammed and the first to believe in his mission,

Amna, his mother, Abdul Muttalib and Hashim his grandfathers, Abu Talib, his uncle and father of the Imam Aly, and others, before reaching the Haram, or precincts of the Cubical House. On arriving at the door and contemplating the Haram, the pilgrim offers up the following prayer : " Lord, this city is Thy city and this house is Thy house. I have come to seek Thy mercy in obedience to Thy order, satisfied with Thy might. Lord, I ask Thee, as one who has need of Thee, afraid of Thy punishment, to receive me with Thy grace, to forgive my sins and to accept me in heaven."

The pilgrim then enters the sacred precincts by the Bab Al-Salam, and as soon as he sees the Haram says: " Lord, this is Thy Haram and the Haram of Thy Prophet ; do not therefore allow my flesh and blood to be burnt by fire. Lord, protect me against Thy punishment on the Day of Resurrection."

The faithful then puts out his right foot first and says : " I seek refuge in God against the dilapidated satan. Lord, bless my master Mohammed and his family. Lord, forgive my sins and open to me the doors of Thy mercy."

The pilgrim then directs his steps to the door of Shiba which is composed of two pillars surmounted by an arch through which he passes, and offers up another prayer. He then proceeds to the south side of the Kaaba, thence to the Hagar Al-Aswad, or the Black Stone, praying the whole time.

The Haram stands in the middle of Mecca and measures from outside 192 metres by 132. Its inside area is 17,902 square metres. Its angles are not right angles and in its four corners domes are built, supported by pillars of alabaster and hewn stone, surmounted by seven minarets.

The Haram has an unroofed courtyard, intersected with many alleys, in the middle of which rises the Kaaba, or Cubical House, to the east of which stands the tomb of Abraham and to the south the well of Zamzam over which a net is spread. To the north rises a marble pulpit of most exquisite workmanship presented by Sultan Soliman. The curator of the Haram is a sheikh who held under the Turks the rank of Mushir or field-marshal, several imams, or chaplains, preachers, muazzins, or those who call Moslems to divine worship, and servants, many of whom are eunuchs.

The Kaaba, as above stated, is said to have been built by Abraham. It is almost square in form, with four angles pointing towards the four cardinal points—the very same principle upon which the Pyramids of Gizeh were built. It is built of hard blue stone, fifteen metres high, and is ten metres and ten centimetres long on one side and twelve metres on the other. Its door is two metres above the level of the ground and is opened on stated days, that is, about fifteen times every year. On other days it is opened to visitors on payment of P.T. 20.

On the 20th Moharrem the Kaaba is opened for

the purpose of washing it, which is an operation of the greatest solemnity, performed in past days in the presence of the Sherif, the Governor-General and the notables of the town.

The Sherif enters first and is followed by the rest of his party, and after having offered up a short prayer, two buckets of water from the Zamzam well are brought to him with which, and with small brooms, he washes the floor. When this is done he again washes it, but this time with rose water sent from Cairo with the Kiswa in two large brass kettles, then the floor and the walls as far the arms can reach are anointed with essence of roses, musk and other perfumes, incense being all the time burned. When all these operations have been performed, the Sherif stands at the door of the Kaaba and throws to the immense crowds assembled outside the brooms used in washing it. The fight to obtain these brooms, which are considered as among the most precious things in the world, is beyond description. Some of the mutauwifin, or guides, however, sell to pilgrims brooms they soak in water which they pretend to have been used in washing the Kaaba. The price of such brooms is at the lowest P.T. 10.

The threshold of the Kaaba is of silver and the two leaves of the door are made of sheet iron covered with gilt silver. The door, which, as above stated, is two metres above the ground, is reached by means of wooden steps overlaid with silver. The ceiling of the Kaaba is orna-

mented with precious stones presented by the different Caliphs. On the 27th of the month of Zul Kida the Kaaba is covered with white calico, which operation is called the ihram of the Kaaba, but in reality it is because the official in charge of it takes away this part of the Kiswa with the object of selling some of it.

The black stone is situated outside the Kaaba at its southern angle. It is oval in shape and is black but somewhat reddish in colour; its diameter is about thirty centimetres, and it is placed, at the height of a metre and a half from the floor, in a silver case with a circular aperture the diameter of which is twenty-seven centimetres. At this aperture the stone has become concave like a native drinking-bowl from the touch of the millions of pilgrims. This stone, according to Mohammedan tradition, fell to the earth from some star.

Also according to Mohammedan tradition this stone was placed there by Abraham either in memory of his having complied with God's commands to him to construct the Cubical House or for some other reason—a point the tradition does not elucidate. It was therefore respected by the Prophet, his son and all the Mohammedans to this day.

It is absurd, say the Mohammedan authorities, to allege that the Moslems worship this stone. In support of this statement they quote what Amr said addressing it :—" I know that thou art a

stone which can do neither harm nor good, and if I had not seen God's Prophet kiss thee I would not have kissed thee myself." It is, therefore, to be looked upon like the flags of nations which are respected, not because they are pieces of canvas hung on poles, but because they are the emblems of the king's might and power before which, in reviews of troops, the crowds uncover their heads and the swords of soldiers are lowered to the ground.

The manner in which the believer salutes the black stone is as follows: He places his right hand on it and kisses it saying: "In the name of God. God is most great and Him I thank." He then raises his hand and offers up another prayer.

The struggle among the pilgrims to kiss this stone during the tawaf is indescribable. Those who are at some distance of it do not hesitate to push and even strike those who are nearer the stone in order to get them out of their way, and when this manner of approaching the stone is in vain they mount on the shoulders of others and thus get to it. Many fatal accidents occur during the tawaf, which can only be expected in such struggles.

There are three columns in the interior of the Kaaba of inestimable value, and its ceiling and walls are covered with embroidered silk bearing the inscription: "God, May His majesty be exalted." Opposite the door stands the Mihrab, or niche, of the Prophet. The Kaaba is lined

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with marble to the height of two metres and on one of its sides hang several tablets bearing various inscriptions.

A mizab, or drain, called Mizab Al-Rahma, or the Drain of Mercy, stands in the middle of one of the walls of the Kaaba, to drain off the rain water. It was originally of brass, but Sultan Soliman in 959 A.H. replaced it by another of silver, and finally in 1270 A.H. it was replaced by one made of gold.

To the left of the door is placed a wooden table covered with a green cloth on which is placed the sack containing the keys of the Kaaba. This sack which is of green silk is annually sent from Egypt with the Kiswa. Gold and silver lamps hang from the ceiling, two of which, adorned with precious stones, were presented by Sultan Soliman in 984 A.H.

The Kaaba became the Kibla, or the point towards which Mohammedans all over the world look in prayer, in the second year of the Hegira. Previous to that year Mohammedans turned their faces to Jerusalem while praying.

As soon as the pilgrim reaches the Sacred City he begins the tawaf, or walking round the Kaaba seven times. One of the principal conditions of the tawaf is perfect purity, the pilgrim not being allowed to carry in his hand his shoes or anything unclean. The tawaf begins from the Black Stone, which the pilgrim should touch and, if possible, kiss, and the distance covered in going

seven times round the Kaaba is seven hundred metres. As the pilgrim makes this journey at least once after every one of the five prayers, the total distance covered in a single day is thus not less than four kilometres. Some, however, cover this distance before and after each prayer, while Indians and Javanese, worn out with years or with disease, go to Mecca in the hope of dying during the tawaf which they perform on a stretcher carried by four men. They consider death in the sacred precincts of the Kaaba as the greatest happiness of their lives.

While performing the tawaf, in fact on approaching all the different parts of the sacred area, the pilgrim has to offer up certain prescribed prayers. In going round the sacred area and visiting its different monuments, the pace of the pilgrim is not always the same. In fact it is sometimes slow and sometimes quick. The ordinary pilgrim being ignorant of the order in which the monuments should be visited, the different prayers to be offered up to God, the pace at which he should go, etc., the services of a mutauwif, or guide, become necessary.

When the tawaf is over, the pilgrim visits the tomb of Abraham which is a dome rising on four pillars and surrounded by a brass wall. In this tomb is placed the stone on which Abraham stood while the Kaaba was being built, and which bears the impression of his feet. The impression of the feet of the Prophet on stone exists also in the

mosque of Al-Sayid in Tantah, of Al-Moayad and of Kait Bey in Cairo, and in various other places. The tomb of Abraham is covered with a gold embroidered silk cloth which is sent from Cairo with the Kiswa.

The pilgrim then directs his steps to the well of Zamzam, the curb of which is of marble. Pilgrims have great faith in the water of this well which they take back with them in sealed vessels as presents to friends at home. It is alkaline, similar to the Vichy water, and is drunk by pilgrims after the tawaf. The faith of some pilgrims in this water is so great that they soak in it long pieces of canvas and recommend their relatives to use them as their shrouds on their death. The net which is placed on this well is of iron and it was placed by order of Sultan Ahmed Khan in 1020 A.H. to prevent fanatics throwing themselves into it. To die in this well gives the pilgrim a high state in the world to come.

The greatest precautions are taken by the employees and servants of the Cubical House that the Black Stone should not be polluted by the Persians as has already been done on three occasions.

The keeper of the Kaaba's key is Al-Sheikh Al Shibi. According to custom the embroidered part of the old Kiswa belongs by right to the Sherif of Mecca, and the rest to the above mentioned religious dignitary who sells it and keeps its price, which thus forms an appreciable part of his income.

As previously stated the muhrim, or pilgrim wearing the ihram dress, is absolutely prohibited from doing various things : cutting his nails, perfuming himself, shooting game, approaching his wife, etc. If, therefore, he unintentionally fails to accomplish any of the above conditions, he must offer a sheep as a sacrifice, otherwise he will have to fast three days during the pilgrimage from the day of wearing the ihram dress to the day of sacrifice, and seven days on his return home. There are various other penalties, varying according as the omission is before or after visiting Arafat, etc.

The idea of wearing the ihram dress is, according to Moslem authorities, because it was the simple dress said to have been worn by Abraham ; further, it is a sign that the faithful has discarded the luxuries of this world and gone back to the primitive condition of man, in which the rich and the poor were alike, to the first dress of man on coming to the world and his last on leaving it.

According to a Moslem writer, it is necessary that the faithful should expose his body to air and to the effects of the atmosphere during a month of every year to regain his lost forces and energy by the oxygen of the air which enters the pores of his body, as Europeans do when they go through an "open air cure."

Great flocks of pigeons have nested on the roof and the windows of the Haram. As it is considered a sin to kill them, they have become so

tame that they hover round the pilgrims who buy corn to feed them with, as tourists do in the Piazza of Venice. They are, however, hunted by cats which live on them. These pigeons are said to have descended from the pigeon which nested in the cave where Mohammed was hidden.

But not only pigeons are safe within the precincts of the Haram; it is a sin to kill any animal within the sacred ground. Some Mohammedan theologians have gone so far as to say that even the scorpion and the serpent should not be killed if found there.

To the south of the Haram stands the Egyptian Tekyieh, or almshouse, which was built by order of Mohammed Aly, the first Viceroy of Egypt. Its staff is composed of a director, and a certain number of servants who prepare soup every morning and distribute it with bread free to over four hundred poor pilgrims. It is a one-storey building and has a number of store-rooms where the corn, etc., sent from Cairo is kept.

On the 8th of Zul Higga, after the pilgrim has performed all the prescribed visits to the holy places of Mecca, he goes, still in his dress of the ihram, to Arafat. After a march of less than an hour he reaches Gabal Al-Nur, or the Mountain of Light, in which the first revelation to Mohammed took place, and later in the day comes to the little town of Muna. There are here about two hundred houses, the property of wealthy natives of Mecca, which are let only during the pilgrim

season. It is called Muna, or desire, because it was here that Abraham, when ordered to sacrifice his son, wished that God would send him a sheep to kill in the place of his son. To the left of Muna stands a stone wall, called the "Statue of the Great Satan," and further on another wall called the "Statue of the Second Satan", and last a circular pond in which stands a square column, called the "Statue of the Third Satan." All these buildings are pelted with pebbles by the pilgrims on their return from Arafat. Further on the pilgrims reach Al-Mashaar Al-Haram, or the sacred rite, where pebbles for stoning the statues are picked up. I shall have more to say on the subject of these pebbles later.

After a total march of six hours from Mecca the pilgrims reach the mountain of Arafat, which is a level ground, one kilometre square, surrounded with mountains, close to a hill of pebbles called the Mountain of Mercy or, more commonly, the Mountain of Arafat. It is called by this name because Adam is said to have made the acquaintance of Eve at this place, or because the Archangel Gabriel said to Abraham there : "Confess thy sins and learn the rites of my religion." Pilgrimage becomes fully accomplished only when the Moslem has stood there. The length of the mountain is about 300 metres and its height thirty metres.

In the afternoon of the 9th of Zul Higga the caravan moves to the foot of the Mountain of

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Mercy where a preacher, the Cadi of Mecca, on camel back and surrounded by a company of soldiers, offers up certain prayers. Close to this preacher stands a chanter holding a handkerchief who repeats the prayers of the preacher. Whenever the handkerchief of this chanter is waved the assembled crowds weep, mourn and supplicate, and in their dress of ihram they look as if the resurrected dead were standing in the presence of God on the Day of Judgment.

At sunset a rocket is fired to inform the pilgrims of the end of the supplications, and the caravan then moves back on its way to Mecca. On arrival at Al-Muzdalafa every pilgrim picks up forty-nine small pebbles which he washes seven times and carefully keeps to throw away later. The tradition is that when Abraham was told to sacrifice his son, Satan advised him to disobey God's command upon which the Patriarch picked up a stone and pelted him with it.

On the 10th Zul Higga, the day of Courban Bairam (*), at about sunrise, while close to the Mashaar Al-Haram, a preacher makes certain prayers which the pilgrims repeat and the caravan then continues its journey back to Mecca. On arrival at the statue of the Great Satan, the pilgrim throws seven of the forty-nine pebbles he has picked up, one by one, saying Allahu Akbar, or

(*) This is the greater of the two Mohammedan feasts and is called in Arabic "Id Al-Adha", or Feast of Sacrifice. Courban Bairam is the Turkish name of this feast.

"God is most great." He then returns to his tent where he discards the ihram dress, puts on his best clothes and kills the prescribed sacrifice. The price of a sheep varies from one and a half to two dollars. On the following day the pilgrim goes to the "Statue of the Second Satan" and throws the second seven pebbles, then to the "Statue of the Third Satan" and throws the third seven pebbles. He then returns to the first statue at which he throws another seven pebbles.

The atmosphere becomes unbearable owing to the great number of sheep killed, which lie on the roads and all round the tents, and the absence of all sanitary arrangements. When the Courban Bairam falls in summer the situation becomes still more terrible.

On the third day of Courban Bairam the caravan moves, and after less than an hour's march, reaches Muna, where every pilgrim throws seven pebbles at the Statue of the Third Satan. He then moves back to the statue of the second, then to that of the first Satan at each of which he throws seven pebbles.

On returning to Mecca the embroidered Kiswa of the Mahmal is put away and replaced by a green covering, the Kiswa being placed temporarily in the Haram.

The Taif is situated at a distance of thirty-six hours' march from Mecca. It is surrounded by a wall, and contains about four hundred houses and six mosques, the most important of which is

among the natives of Muscat, which cannot be described here.

While on the subject of the Bedouin, it will not be out of place to say a few more words on these inhabitants of the desert. All these men belong to tribes which number from 7000 to a few hundred. They live principally on the hire of their camels during the pilgrim season, and while most of them live in tents some own plantations, especially palm-trees.

But one and all are by nature brigands who do not hesitate to murder wayfarers to rob them of their possessions, and the pilgrims know this fact and live in constant terror of them. They prefer to have to do with weak pilgrims, especially those accompanied by ladies and whose baggage is heavy and valuable. On the road, particularly in dangerous places, they pretend to keep watch at night, but as soon as the pilgrims fall asleep they rob them of all their valuables. How often were wealthy pilgrims murdered by those Bedouin to obtain their possessions !

The poorer Bedouin who do not own camels to hire follow the caravan at a distance and approach the camp only at night with the object of robbery. As they always succeed in entering the tents and running away with some of the pilgrims' valuables or other articles which they sell when the pilgrim season is over, they make enough to live upon during the whole year.

Before concluding this chapter it is necessary

diameter is about one and a half metres, and the shaft, which is of white metal, is so long that it can be planted in the stirrup of the officer carrying it, and in the ground opposite the Emir's tent. In this latter case it stands for the flag usually hoisted above a prince's tent.

The Sherif is followed in these processions by the notables of Mecca, some on horseback, others on donkey-back, all of them wearing their full dress uniforms and decorations.

The procession in which the Emir moves from one place to another is the same as that of the Abbasside and Fatimite Caliphs, as is proved by the Makrizi in his famous history.

The Emir of Mecca was the *de facto* ruler of that part of the Turkish dominions. Those approaching him kiss either his hand or his knee

soldiers, and one battalion of foot and another of mounted constabulary. The garrisons of Jeddah, Rabieh, Yambo and Al-Taif were composed of half a battalion each. In all the Hedjaz there were two regiments of artillery. All these forces were commanded by a Turkish field-marshal.

When the pilgrim has accomplished all the rites connected with Mecca, he remains in that city a week or ten days before proceeding to Medina.

During that period Mecca is in the most confused condition imaginable, every pilgrim trying to hire camels to take him to Medina. And here it must be stated that the camel is the sole source of revenue to these Arabs, as it was over thirteen centuries ago. They feed on its milk and flesh, they sell its hair, they wear its skin, in a word it is to those inhabitants of the barren desert as land is to those who live in fertile countries.

The fare by camel from Mecca to Medina was about L.T. 6, of which the Sherif received one dollar, the Turkish Governor-General another dollar, the guide another and the mukharrig a fourth dollar. The net fare to the owner of the camel was therefore about L.T. 5. I say that the fare of the camel was about L.T. 6 advisedly, because it fluctuated according to the greed of the Mecca authorities. To make up for what they have to pay the authorities, and from a natural want of honesty, the camel owners often demanded payment of the camel's fare a second time on the way, threatening to leave the pilgrims and their effects on the spot and depart. As a general rule they succeeded in getting paid a second time.

There can be no hope of the pilgrims escaping from the tyranny of these lawless tribes of Bedouin until Medina and Mecca are joined by rail. By doing so the pilgrims will be completely independent of the Arabs and their camels, their lives and property will be safer and the journey made in a shorter time and much less expensive than now.

THE SACRED CITY OF MECCA

In this way the Government of the Hedjaz might render an inestimable service to the millions of pilgrims who visit the Holy Places of Islam.

The dress of the camel driver is never changed until it is worn out to shreds. The wealthy among them, however, change it once a year in the pilgrim season. The colour of their dress is generally dark yellow or brick red. They prefer these colours as they prevent their being recognized at a distance, especially when their object is to rob or murder.

VI.

THE SACRED CITY OF MEDINA

THE pilgrim who has accomplished all the rites connected with his visit to Mecca, now turns his face towards Medina. When camels have been hired and the pilgrims' effects placed on them, the caravan moves to the sacred city of Medina, which it reaches after about a fortnight's march in the desert. The road through this desert and the valleys is uninteresting, and the journey would be monotonous were it not for the constant difficulties of the pilgrims with the Arab camelmen. Finally the Mahmal reaches Medina and stops not far from the gate of Anbarieh, where the Turkish troops are waiting to receive it.

The next morning the Mahmal enters the town, preceded, surrounded and followed by these troops, and alights at a spot called Al-Manakha, or the place where camels kneel, at which moment a salute of eleven guns is fired. On entering the Bab Al-Masri every mounted pilgrim dismounts, and every native in the town stands up in honour of the Mahmal, while incense is burned before

it. On reaching the Bab Al-Salam, or the Door of Peace, the Mahmal camel mounts some steps and reaches a place just large enough to hold it, where the Sheikh of the Haram receives the camel's halter and makes it kneel down before the door of the Haram, the threshold of which is saluted with kisses. The Mahmal is then removed from the camel's back by the Mahmal officials, wearing white gubbas, sashes and turbans, and taken to the Prophet's Hugra, or chamber, and placed near his tomb.

The Manakha, above spoken of, is an extensive square, separated from Medina by a wall which has a door leading to the interior of the town, called the Bab Al-Masri. To the north of the Manakha is the Mosque of the Imam Aly, and not far from it stands the Mosque of the Cloud, so called because while Mohammed was praying in it on a day of intense heat, a cloud covered it to protect him from the burning rays of the sun.

The pilgrim cannot here dispense with the services of a murshid, or guide, to help him to accomplish the rites connected with this visit, especially as there are specified prayers to be offered up almost at every corner. The pilgrim enters the Haram by the Bab Al-Salam, placing his hand on his breast, and directs his steps to the back of the Hugra, saying :—

“ Lord, Thou art Peace, from Thee is Peace and to Thee Peace reverts. Greet us, O Lord, with peace, and allow us to enter Paradise which is

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Thy Home, the home of Peace. Mayest Thou, Our Lord, be blessed and exalted, Thou the Lord of majesty and of honour."

The pilgrim then passes between the pulpit and the Hugra, also called Roda, and offers up another special prayer. He then directs his steps to the window of the Tauba, or repentance, and says :—

"Lord, grant me and my parents Thy pardon, and have mercy upon them for they have brought me up."

This window, which faces the Prophet's tomb, bears the following inscription : "People will crowd at the door of Him Who is accustomed to do good to everybody, Whose favours cover all, for the source of sweet water is always crowded."

There are three small circular apertures in this window, not larger than a man's hand from the first of which the "bright star" is seen. This "bright star," which is suspended from the ceiling of the Hugra, is a diamond as large as a pigeon's egg; it weighs ninety-two karats, and is worth £800,000. It was presented to the Hugra by Sultan Ahmed in 1022 A.H. To this diamond is attached a large emerald of great value, and both stones are covered with a gold net. Under these stones is a small circular cavity in which sandal wood powder is placed on the 17th of Zul Kida, and on the same date of the following year is taken possession of by the eunuchs and distributed among the pilgrims as a holy gift. In this circular

cavity every new-born baby in Medina is placed on the fortieth day after its birth, in the same way as the Meccans place their babies on the threshold of the Kaaba.

The pilgrim stands with his hands on his breast, a sign of reverence, at a distance of two paces, or about four feet, from the first of those apertures, gazing towards the tomb, and reciting a long prayer which the guide teaches him. He then moves towards the second aperture which faces the tomb of Omar Ibn Al-Khattab and recites another prayer. The pilgrim then moves to the east of the tomb and stands before the middle window, one of the three windows called "the place from which revelation was made." Here the pilgrim salutes the four angels, Gabriel, Michael, Israfil, and Ezrail. He then moves to the door of Fatima and offers up a prayer. Close to this door, say the Moslem theologians, is the spot in which Jesus, son of Mary, will be buried when he descends from heaven. The pilgrim then salutes the dwellers of the Baki, or the cemetery, Sidi Hamza, the martyrs, the niche of Osman Ibn Affan, at each of which he offers up prayers.

The pilgrim then enters the Haram to visit the Gaz, or trunk of a tree, on which Mohammed used to stand while preaching before he used a pulpit. He then visits the niche, the pulpit, the Roda and the Osman Koran. This Koran is covered with a net, and is opened only on occasions of the greatest gravity, such as times of war or pestilence,

when a part of it is read. It is one of the seven copies of the Koran which were written when the Holy Book was collected from those who knew it by heart during the Caliphate of Osman. When the Caliph was murdered this copy was discovered in his house, stained with blood.

Permission to enter the Hugra is granted by the eunuchs, and only at sunset, for the purpose of lighting the lamps and candles. For this purpose the pilgrim must wear a white costume with which the eunuchs supply him. This privilege of lighting the lamps and candles of the Hugra is considered a great honour, and granted only to the high and mighty who may, however, have this service rendered by others on payment of a certain sum of money.

The Haram of Medina is the mosque of the Prophet, and stands in the middle of the town. It measures 155 pics on the east and west sides, 115 pics on the south and 88 pics on the north side. It is built of stone extracted from one of the neighbouring mountains, and its pillars, which are not less than 323 in number, are decorated with paintings. The floor is of marble covered with costly carpets, and it has five minarets and five gates. In the centre of the Haram is a courtyard called the Haswa which has a well and a small garden containing some palm-trees, called the Garden of Sayyida Fatima.

The doors of the Haram are closed at three o'clock (Turkish time, *i.e.* three hours after sunset),

except during the pilgrim season, leaving only the eunuchs inside. A flock of pigeons lives in this Haram also, which it is considered a sin to catch or shoot.

This mosque was enlarged during the caliphate of Omar Ibn Al-Khattab in the year 17 of the Hegira and again in the year 19 by Osman Ibn Affan, and in the year 89 by Al-Wahd Ibn Abdel Malik, who built the niche and the four minarets at its four corners. It was later enlarged in 160 A.H. by Al-Mahdi Ibn Al-Mansur, but it was shortly afterwards destroyed by fire. In the year 650 it was repaired by Beibars, then by Kalaun, rulers of Egypt. The dome was constructed by Sultan Mansur Kalaun in 678 and repaired by two Sultans in 831 and 853, but in 879, during the reign of Kait Bey, it was burned down and rebuilt for the second time. This same Sultan constructed one dome of the Hugra as it now stands. In 1270 Sultan Abdul Magid, decorated the columns and ceiling, and paved the floor with marble, which works cost no less than L.T. 750,000.

This mosque has been lit with electricity since the opening of the Hedjaz Railway on the 25th Shaban 1326 A.H. during the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid.

The Hugra of the Prophet was the house of Aisha, daughter of Abu Bakr and wife of Mohammed, and it is here that he was buried. Close to his tomb stand the tombs of Abu Bakr and Omar

Ibn Al-Khattab. It has four doors one of which, situated opposite to the Window of the Revelation, Mohammed used in going out of the Hugra on his way to the Haram to make his prayers.

The cover of the Hugra was first made by order of Khaizaran, one of the concubines of Al-Mahdi, an Abbaside Caliph, who was the mother of Harun Al-Rashid. The present pulpit, which is of marble, was made by order of Sultan Suliman.

The guardians and servants of the Hugra are, as aforesaid, the eunuchs who were employed for the first time by Nur Al-Din Al-Shadid. They were formerly twelve in number, and one of the conditions of their employment was their knowing by heart the whole Koran. Youssef Salah Al-Din Al-Ayuby added twelve more to their number, which the Sultans increased until they now number more than one hundred. They live in houses provided for them by the Government and were paid from revenues of wakfs in Constantinople.

They usually wear white turbans, and when employed inside the Haram they wear white robes over their ordinary clothes. Their chief is a Pasha, who is the Sheikh of the Haram and who held the exalted rank of Mushir, or field-marshal.

The rest of the staff is composed of a large number of sweepers, door-keepers, water-carriers, and others who are not less than one hundred and fifty in number.

There are in the Haram not less than fifty preachers, each of whom officiates once a week on Friday

in accordance with a special order of precedence. They all have assistants to replace them when prevented from preaching by illness or some other reason.

The preacher when officiating, wears a high cap called kodaban, which was worn by the Turks in the tenth century, and, surrounded by the eunuchs, he ascends the pulpit. The subject of these sermons, during the pilgrim season, is invariably the duty of the believer's visit to the tomb of the Prophet and the necessity of union and concord between Mohammedans, with which he mixes a great deal of Mohammed's talk.

When the pilgrim leaves the Haram he directs his steps to the tomb of Abd Allah, father of Mohammed, who is buried in the house of Malik, one of his maternal uncles. He then proceeds to the Baki, which is 150 metres long by one hundred wide, and is situated outside the town. This is the cemetery of Medina, and it is here that the children of Mohammed (Zeinab, Fatima, Ibrahim, Kasim, Tahir and Al-Tayib) were buried. It is here also that the Prophet's wives who survived him (Aisha, Hafsa, Ramla, Soda, Safiya, Umm Salama, Zeinab and Umm Habiba) were buried. Maimuna, another wife of Mohammed, is buried on the road to Mecca.

The visit to Baki is allowed only on Thursday when the pilgrims place basil plant branches on the tombs. Beyond the Baki is a smiling valley of groves of palm-trees.

All Shiites visiting the dome of the Prophet's family tomb in the Baki have to pay a fee of five piastres. In Mecca a fee of one dollar is charged all visitors to the Kaaba, whether Shiite or Sunnite. If the visitor is a man of means there is no limit to what he may be asked to pay. In fact, it depends on the extent of the man's wealth. In like manner, the eunuchs, who are the guardians of the Hugra in Medina, charge all pilgrims wishing to visit it before sunset when candles are lit, a fee of one dollar.

To the north of Medina, at a distance of forty minutes' march, stands Gebel Ahad to which pilgrims repair on a Thursday to visit the tomb of Hamza. On the road to this mountain, the pilgrim passes through cultivated lands to which the inhabitants of Medina usually go for an airing.

Besides the jewels mentioned above a large tablet made of gold is hung in the Hugra bearing the following inscription in the finest diamonds :

"There is no God but God, and Mohammed is his Prophet."

It was presented by Adila, daughter of Sultan Mahmud, in the year 1291 A.H. An ornament, in the shape of a necklace, is hung in the chamber of Fatima bearing the inscription in diamonds : "Fatima Al-Zahra", and next to it is a necklace of the largest pearls of inestimable value. This, besides a large number of chandeliers of the purest gold, studded with precious stones, each of which is about two metres high, was presented by Sultan Abdel Magid in 1274 A.H. Close to these chan-

THE SACRED CITY OF MEDINA

deliers are brooms and fans mounted with precious stones, also of the greatest value. The closets of the Hugra are full of Korans and other objects ornamented with precious stones. The total value of these jewels is estimated at 7 million pounds.

Medina, called in Arabic Al-Madina Al-Munawwara, or the Illuminated City, was called, before the Hegira, Yasrib. It is situated in Nagd at a distance of 350 kilometres north of Mecca, and was built by one of the Kings of Humeir in an extensive desert to the north of which stands the mountain of Ahad. It is surrounded by a wall built by Adud Al-Daulah Al-Dailamy, which was renewed by Sultan Suliman in 945 A.H. and repaired by Sultan Mahmud in 1162. It has a population of 60,000, 4000 houses, ten mosques, twelve bookshops and one fort.

It is 619 metres above sea level, and in summer the temperature rises to 48° Centigrade, and falls in winter to 10° above freezing-point.

The original inhabitants of Medina were the Ansâr, or auxiliaries, who invited Mohammed and his adherents to their city, and were the first to take up arms in behalf of Islam, but the present population are the descendants of Indians, Turks and others. They have generally dark skins, and are lean. They are fond of vice, but are polite and witty, and honour those who come to live in their midst.

None but Mohammedans are allowed to enter Medina, as is the case with Mecca.

THE MOSLEM PILGRIMAGE

The majority of the natives earn their living from the service of the Haram, especially during the pilgrim season.

The streets of Medina are narrow, especially in the neighbourhood of the Haram, and its houses are small and irregularly built, mostly three storeys high. The windows are of the Arabesque style. The principal street is Harat Al-Saha, where the Governor lives.

There are in Medina and its neighbourhood a number of shrines the most celebrated of which is the mosque of Kaba which was the first mosque built. It is situated at a distance of five kilometres out of town and was constructed by Mohammed and renewed by Sultan Abdul Hamid I. The courtyard is covered with a dome built over the spot in which the Prophet's camel knelt.

The natives drink from wells, but principally from the Ain Al-Zarka, or the Blue Spring, the water of which is sweeter than that of the other springs. It is so called because Marwan, in whose days it was discovered, had blue eyes.

The most important library in Medina is that of Sheikh Al-Islam, which is not far from the Haram. One of the most curious books this library contains, perhaps unique of its kind, is the manuscript of a book of poems in Persian, in which the words were at first written on other paper, then carefully cut out and pasted on the blank leaves of this book!

There was in Medina only one newspaper called "Al-Madina Al-Munawwara," which was pub-

THE SACRED CITY OF MEDINA

lished at first in Turkish and Arabic. It was written by hand in special ink and reproduced on a duplicator—a system which allowed only a very limited number of copies to be printed. It appeared at irregular times.

The Egyptian Tekyieh, or Almshouse, is 89 metres long by 50 metres wide, and receives from Egypt the provisions it distributes to the poor. Every morning during the pilgrim season no less than 500 poor men flock to this Tekyieh to receive soup and bread, and, on Fridays, rice also.

The four cardinal points are called in Medina Al-Sham (Syria) north, bahari (towards the sea) west, sharki (towards the rising of the sun) east, and kibli (towards the kibra) south.

As in Mecca, the town is all astir during the pilgrim season. Almost everything that is sold in Medina is made abroad and the prices are considerably higher than in Mecca or Egypt, but the pilgrims usually buy a number of articles here, not because they need them but as a blessing. The only article exported is the dates of which no less than seventy kinds grow in that part of Arabia.

There are no schools to speak of in Medina, all that is taught in the Haram being Moslem jurisprudence and exegesis of the Koran. The Turkish Government some time ago thought of building a great Moslem University in this city.

Like Mecca, Medina has a sacred territory in which shooting is prohibited. The radius of this territory is one kilometre from the Haram.

VII.

THE HAIFA-MEDINA RAILWAY

WHEN this line, which was constructed by the Turkish Government, was in operation pilgrims took this route to Medina, the journey to Mecca remaining as hitherto. The distance from Haifa to Medina is 1333 kilometres and the speed of the trains did not exceed 30 kilometres per hour, while at certain parts of the line it was not more than 15. The fare was £ 14 for the first class and £ 7 for the third, for the journey to Medina and back. There was no second class. The number of stations between Damascus and Medina was 75.

The pilgrim who has performed these sacred visits now returns home, where his family and friends meet him and give entertainments in his honour. Among the lower classes, especially in the provinces, the façade of the pilgrim's house is then decorated with a picture of the Mahmal, its caravan and officials, and he is thenceforward called Hag, or pilgrim.

The only Khedives of Egypt who performed this pilgrimage are Said Pasha in 1277 A.H., and Abbas II in 1327 of the same era.

THE HAIFA-MEDINA RAILWAY

I cannot close this book in a more fitting manner than by quoting an Arab writer on the Moslem Pilgrimage :

If the sun and moon came down to the earth and settled at some distance from each other, all on the earth's surface would go to see them without taking into account the dangers and the fatigue of the journey or the distance they have to travel. They will go first to the sun whose rays guide them to it, not heeding what is under their feet, whether dry land or the water of the sea, until they reach their destination. They then repair to the moon whose light also guides them, and 'once they have attained their object they return home. To all Moslems the Kaaba is the sun and Medina the moon.

The same writer says :

The pilgrims meet on land with indiscribable difficulties. They do not enjoy their meals, for they are either not to be found, or they do not have enough time at the halting-stations to cook them properly, and are obliged to live on dry food such as biscuits, cheese, olives, etc. As for the water, it is either unobtainable or undrinkable, for it is more often brackish than fresh ; indeed, it often stinks. The hours of the pilgrims' meals and sleep also are not regular, while the fatigues of camel-riding for long days can be imagined, and should the pilgrim be obliged to come down for some reason or other, he is afraid of being left behind, and consequently robbed and murdered.

THE MOSLEM PILGRIMAGE

As for those who make the journey on foot, they often sleep while walking. All these difficulties are, however, not to be compared with the dangers the pilgrims run at every moment owing to the Bedouin who are ever ready to rob and murder them. But all these great hardships are not taken into any account by the true Moslem, for God will compensate him for them by forgiving his sins. When the Moslem makes up his mind to visit the sacred towns of Mecca and Medina, the idea takes possession of his heart and soul and he sacrifices everything for it and bears with patience and fortitude the hardships of the journey. And what a day is that on which he reaches his destination, for tongues cannot describe it !

THE END.

ILLUSTRATIONS

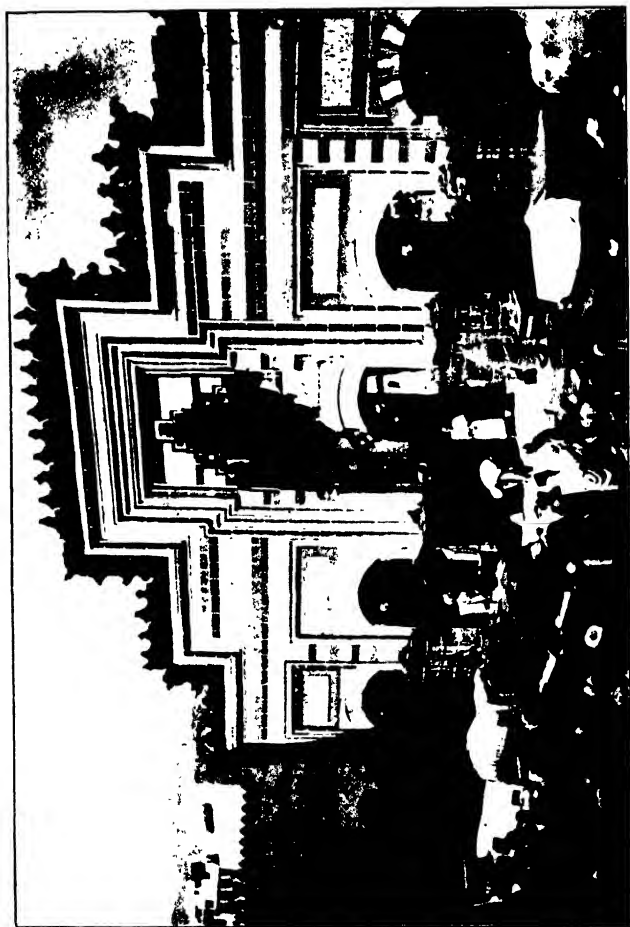


Photo Batanunı Bey.

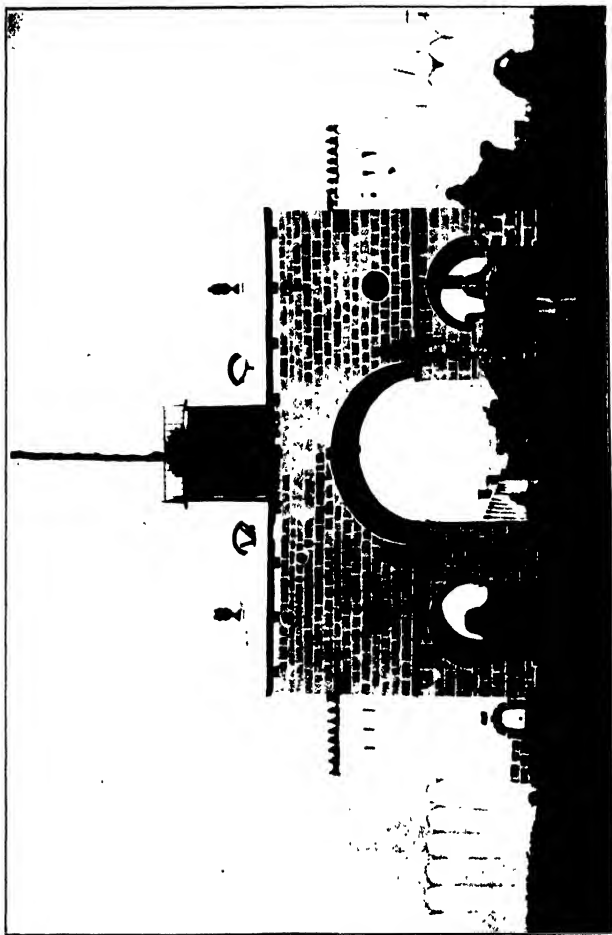


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ANBARIEH GATE AT MECCA.

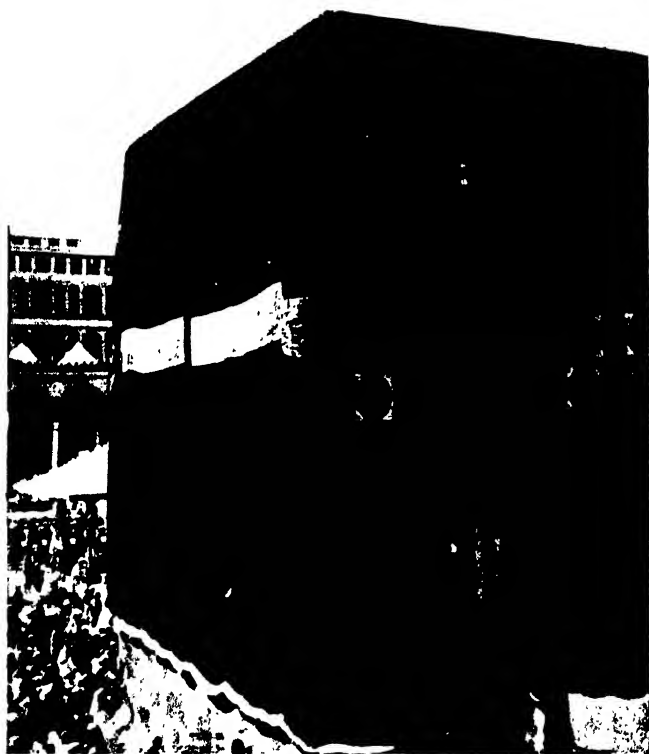


Photo Ibrahim Rifat Pasha.
EASTERN AND SOUTHERN SIDE OF THE KAABA WITH DOOR.



Photo Ibrahim Rifat Pasha

THE KAABA.

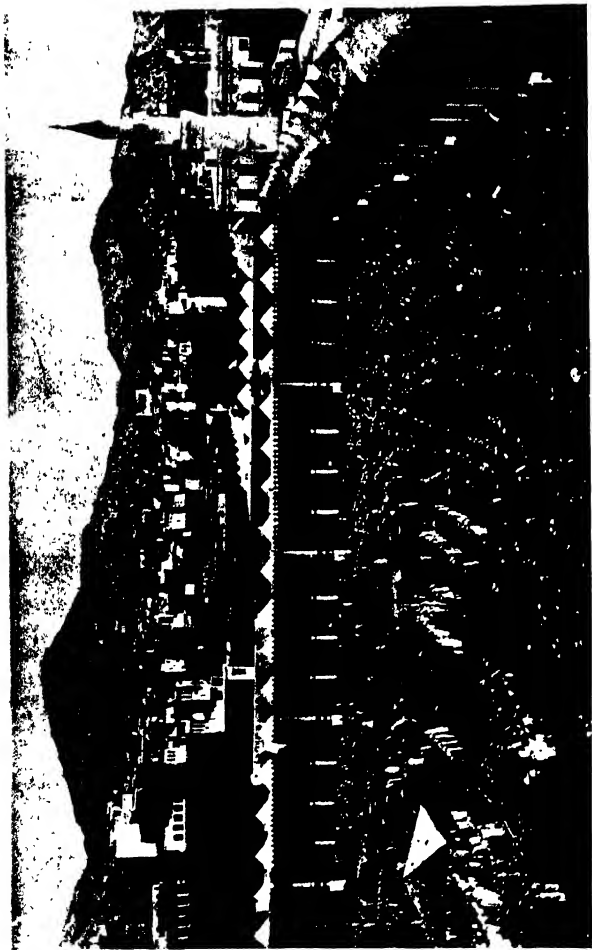


Photo Ibrahim Rifat Pasha.

NORTH WESTERN VIEW, OF THE KAABA. PILGRIMS MAKING
THEIR AFTERNOON PRAYERS

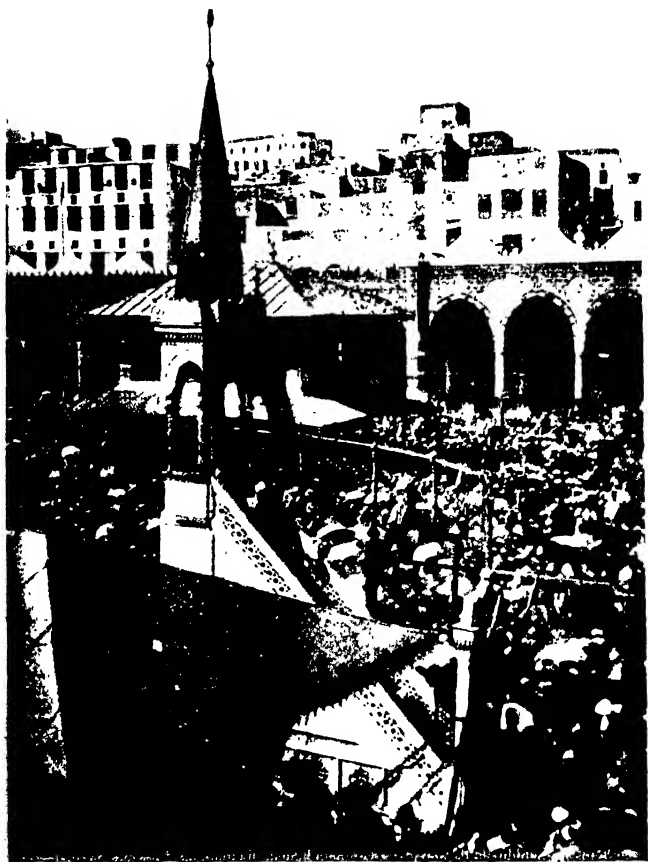


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PREACHER IN THE PULPIT DURING FRIDAY PRAYERS AT

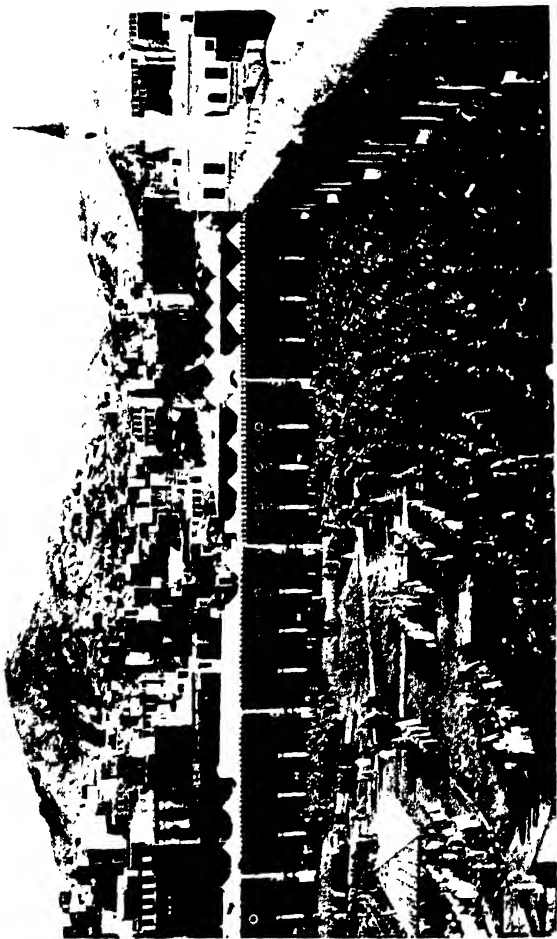


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AFTERNOON PRAYERS AT MIECCA HARAM.

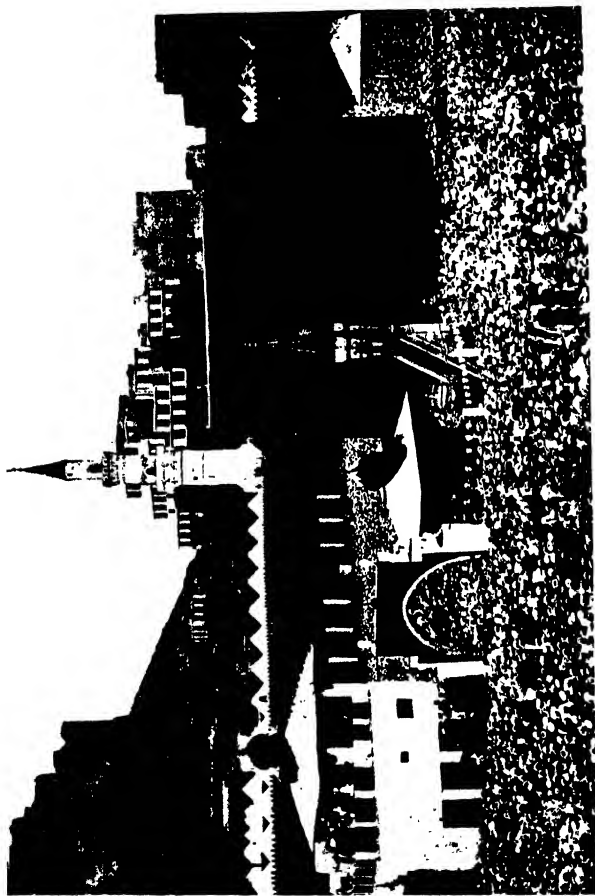


Photo Batanuni Bey.

PILGRIMS PRAYING IN THE HARAM.



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MEETING OF THE PILGRIMS ROUND THE KAABA FOR THE FRIDAY PRAYERS.

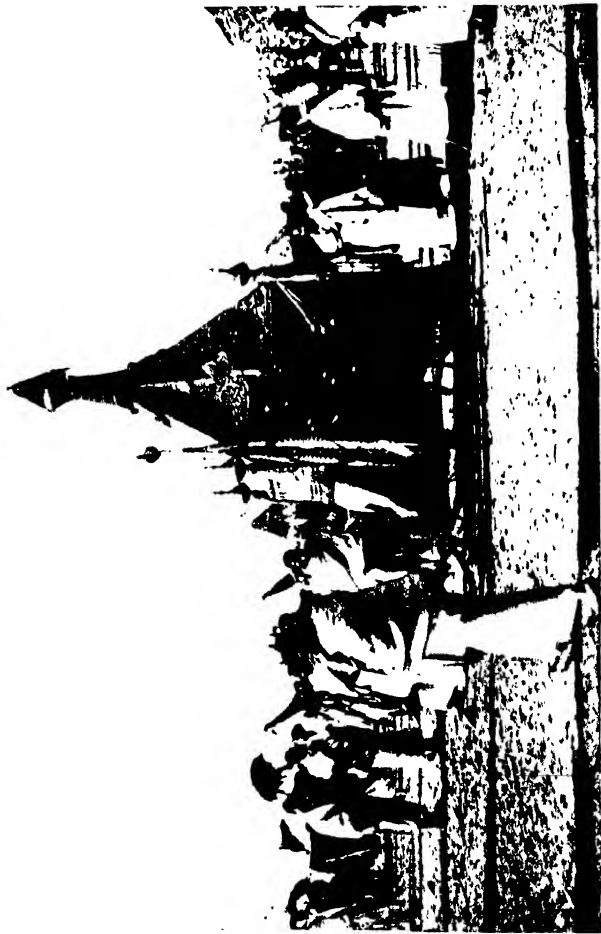


Photo Ibrahim Rifai Pasha.

THE MAHMAL IN ARAFAT.



From an old print.

THE CAMEL WHICH CARRIES THE MAHMAL.



Phot: Ibrahim Rifat Pasha

DOMES OF AL-SAYYIDA KHADIGA IN MECCA.

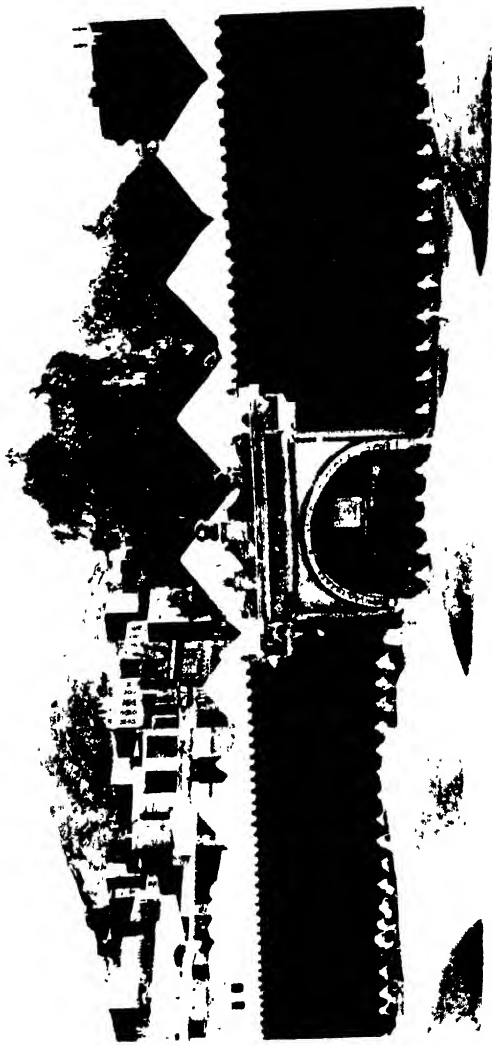


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ASYLUM BUILT BY MOHAMMED ALI PASHA, KHEDIVE OF EGYPT, AT MECCA.

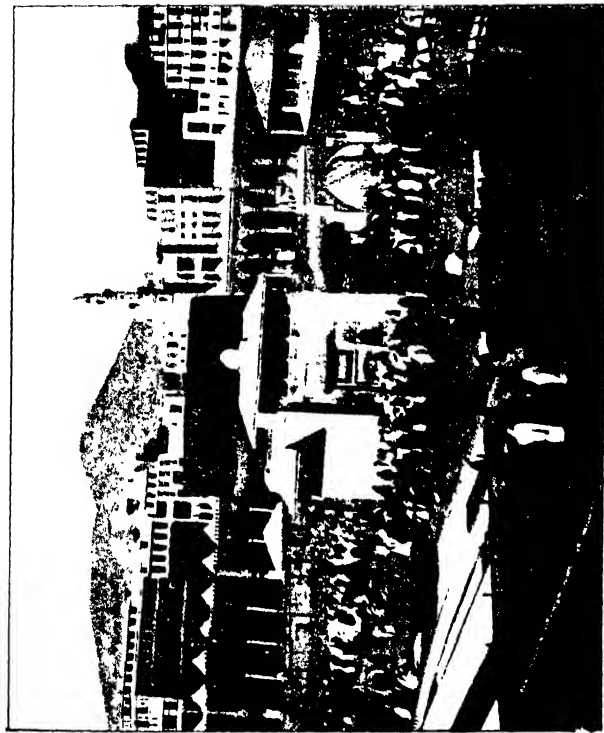


Photo Ibrahim Rifat Pasha
ZAMZAM WELL WITH THE PILGRIMS DRINKING FROM IT.



Photo Batanuni Bey

THE MOSQUE OF HAMZA



Photo Sadik Pasha.

THE PILGRIM IN HIS IHRAM DRESS.

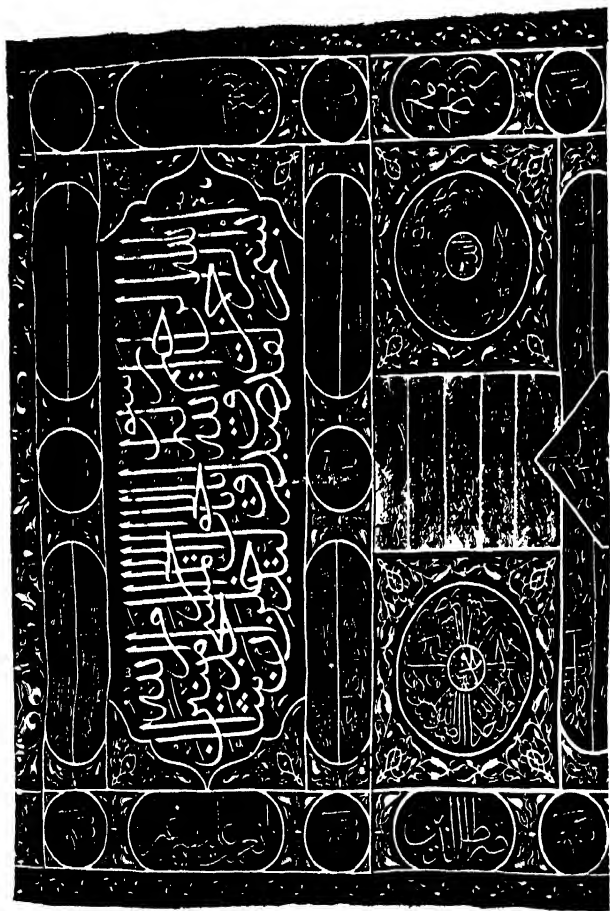


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CURTAIN FOR THE DOOR OF THE KAABA.

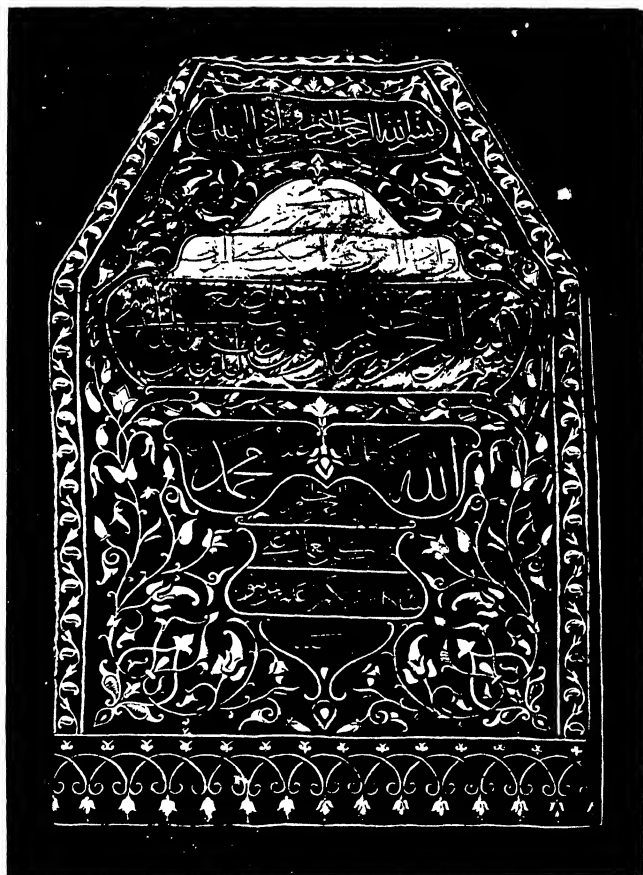


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CURTAIN FOR THE TOMB OF THE PROPHET IBRAHIM.

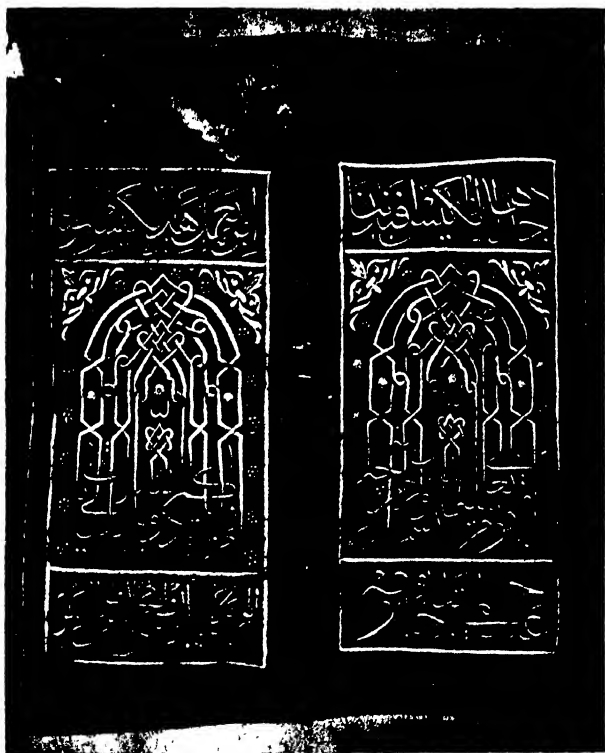


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BAG CONTAINING THE KEY OF THE KAABA.

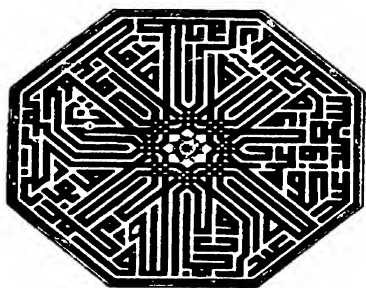
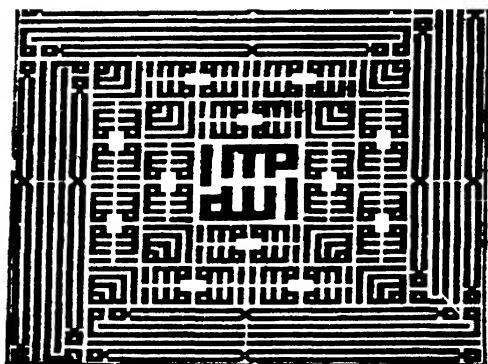


Photo Sadik Bey.
 NAMES OF THE TEN "RIGHTEOUS"
 IN CUFIC.



Photos Sadik Bey.
 ALABASTER TABLET ON WHICH
 "ALLAH" IS ENGRAVED
 SIXTY SIX TIMES IN CUFIC.

Both these tablets are in one of
 the private houses of Medina.



Photo Ibrahim Rifat Pasha

THE BAKI, SHOWING DOME OF PROPHET'S FAMILY. AND THE DOMES
OF OSMAN AND MALIK.



Photo Batanani Bey

STONING THE DEVIL IN MUNA.



Photo Ibrahim Rifat Pasha.

YAMBO AL-NAKHL SPRING.

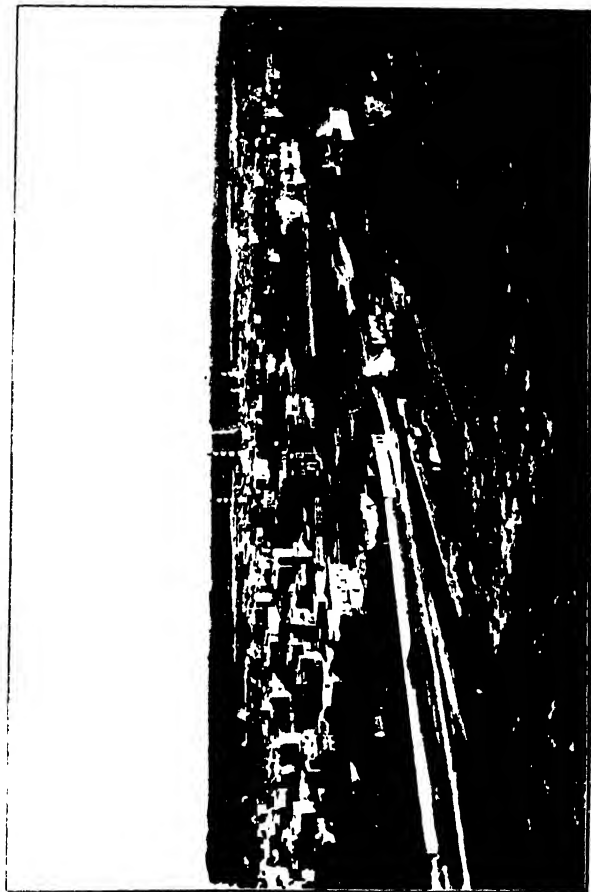


Photo Batanuni Bey.

GENERAL VIEW OF MEDINA.



Photo Ibrahim Rifat Pasha

MEDINA AS SEEN FROM THE NORTH



Photo Batanuni Bey.

THE GATE OF AL-RAHMA.



Photo Batanuni Bey

THE GATE OF AL-SALAM.

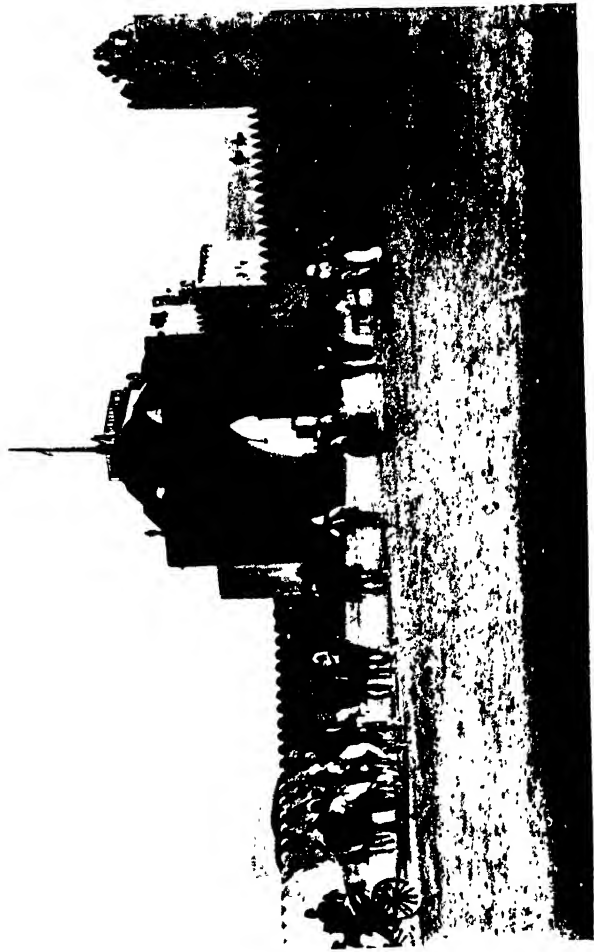


Photo Ibrahim Rifat Pasha.

THE ANBARIAH GATE OF MEDINA



Photo Batanui Bey.
THE HARAM, HUGRA AND GARDEN OF SAYIDA FATIMA.



Photo Batanuni Bey.

THE INTERIOR OF THE RODA.

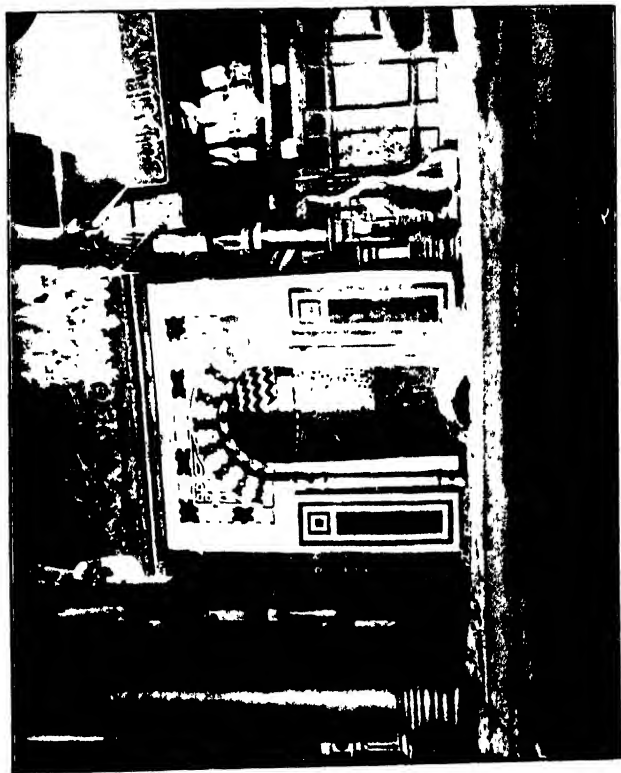


Photo Batanuni Bey

THE KIBLA (NICHE).



Photo Sadık Bey

THE HUGRA.

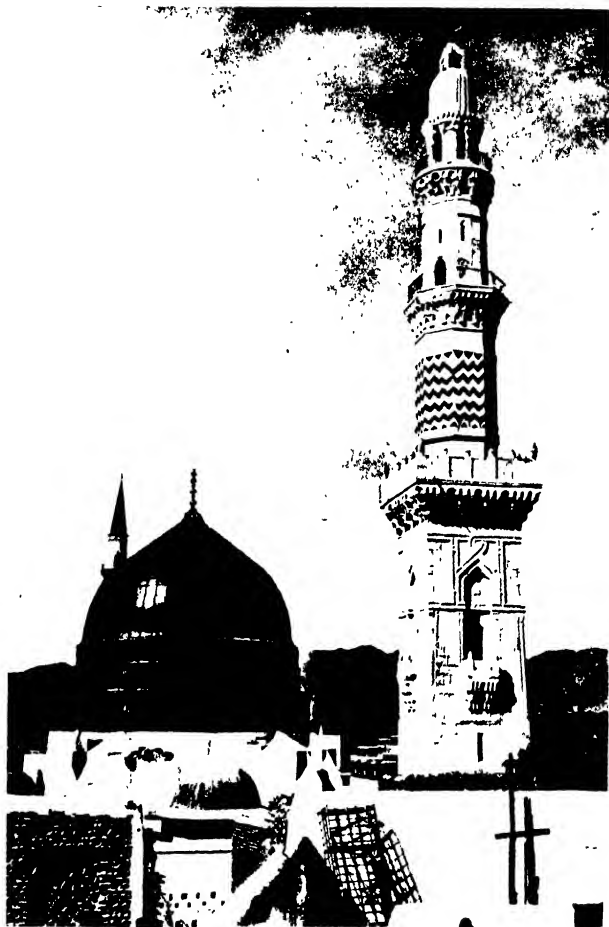


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DOMES OF PROPHET MOHAMED, ABU BAKR AND OMAR
AT NABI MOSQUE IN MEDINA.

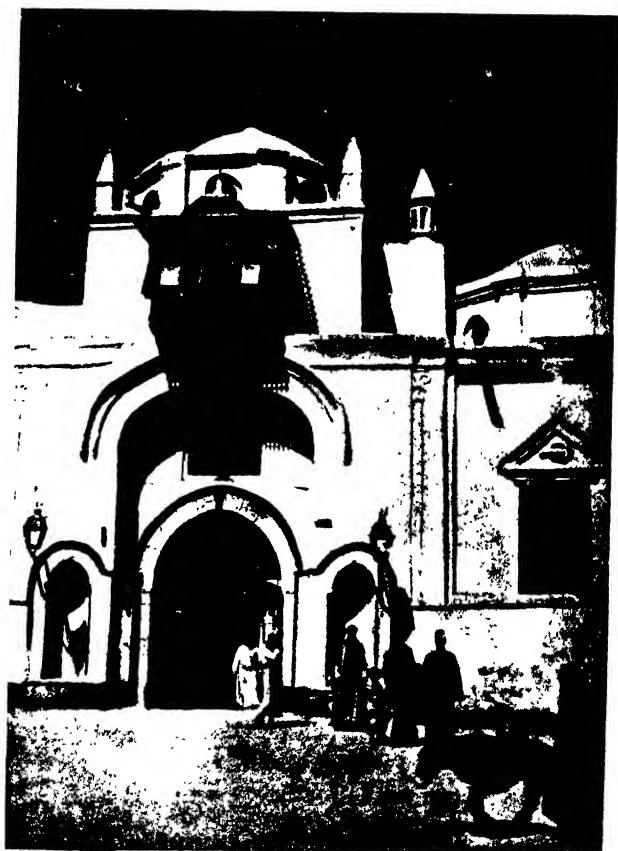


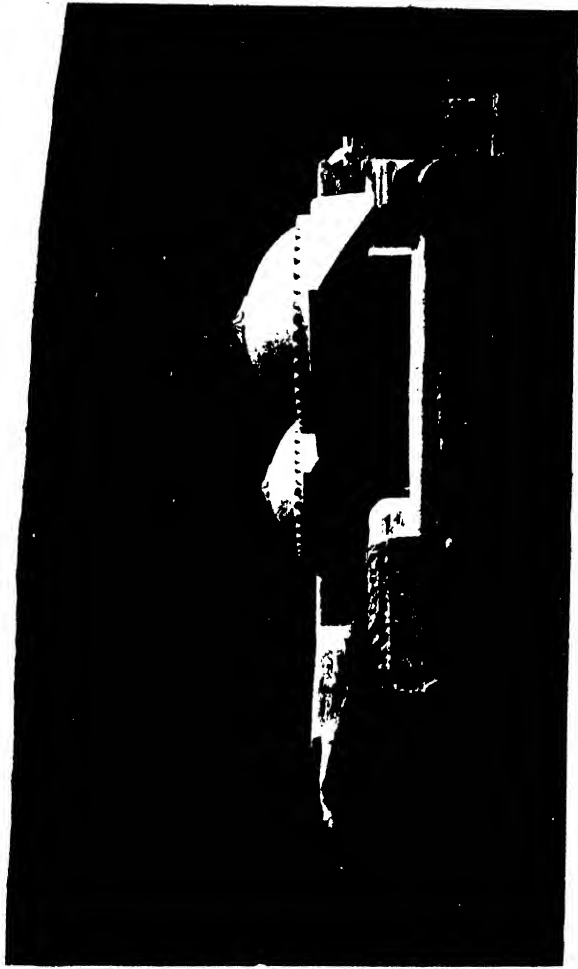
Photo Ibrahim Rifat Pasha

DOOR OF ASYLUM BUILT BY MOHAMMED ALI PASHA,
KHEDIVE OF EGYPT, AT MEDINA.



Photo Batanuni Bey.

THE EGYPTIAN TEKYEIH (ASYLUM) IN MEDINA.



DOMES OF THE PROPHET'S GRANDFATHERS AND UNCLE
Photo Ibrakov Rifat Pasha.